

Student Council Policies Due to Lapse 2018-2019

The Students' Association's Democracy Regulations state that policies shall be deemed to have lapsed after four years unless they are readopted by Student Council, or they are subsequently replaced, overturned or amended.

To uphold an existing policy, it must be submitted as a new [motion](#) by **9am on Tuesday 19 March**.

Motion Title	Date Passed	Motion Progress
Parents and Carers	April 2015	
The Future of Rainy Kitchen	October 2014	Ongoing works
Authorised Interruption of Studies	February 2015	Kai (VP Welfare) and Diva (VP Education) have opposed University proposed changes for mandatory interruption of studies. The proposed changes to this policy are due to be voted on in May. Diva and Kai are continuing to work on centring student needs in this process by protesting the mandatory aspect, as well as improving support for students whilst on interruptions of studies.
Tax Justice	February 2015	
Cost of Care Subsidy for Elected Reps	February 2015	
Mid-Term Feedback Form for Tutors	February 2015	Completed
Erasmus and Health	February 2015	Kai (VP Welfare) has recently launched a survey on mental health support for students studying abroad. The University is creating a platform for learning abroad experiences. The Sabbatical Officers have also lobbied for a trip advisor style review mechanism for those studying away from Edinburgh.
Gym Access for Disabled Students	April 2015	
Extending the Provision of Gender Neutral Spaces	April 2015	Gender neutral toilets are now in every Students' Association venue apart from KB House due to the fire. In 2017/18 Kai (VP Welfare) led a toilet audit of University buildings and



		compiled a list of toilets and changing rooms suitable for conversion. Some have now been converted, but this is an ongoing process. There are gender neutral changing facilities at Pleasance Gym.
EUSA Recognises Structural Oppression and Discrimination	April 2015	Diva (VP Education) and the Liberation Officers are continuing to work on highlighting liberation issues and including these in the curriculum and University practices. The Students' Association recognises structural oppression as evidenced by the creation of five liberation officers to represent marginalised students to the Students' Association and Unvieristy.

Some of the policies passed in the 2014/15 academic session were related to the old democracy regulations which were subsequently reviewed and [updated in April 2017](#), and as such have not been in detailed in this document. Additionally, several policies referenced events specific to that year, or more up-to-date policy has been passed on the issue at subsequent councils, and so these have also not been included. This applies to:

Motion Title	Date Passed	Motion Progress
Safe Space Policy Update	September 2014	Democracy Regulations changed
Update EUSA Safe Space Policy to include Nationality/Country of Citizenship	November 2014	Democracy Regulations changed
Changes to Election Regulations	February 2015	Democracy Regulations changed
Let's Sack Citrix	November 2014.	Citrix no longer used in SSPS.
Extension of the Graduate Discount Scheme	February 2015	New policy passed in February 2019.
Creation of a Conveners Forum	April 2015	Democracy Regulations changed
Support of the Amsterdam Protests	April 2015	Protests over
DKEff Off: Calling Time on Frat Culture	April 2015	Group disbanded in 2014
SWP Off Campus	November 2014	Socialist Workers Party no longer present on campus.

All Student Association Policy can be viewed on the [website](#).



Parents and Carers

What will we do?

1. Create a parents and carers section group within EUSA's democratic structure.
2. Create a position, elected in EUSA's general election, for the convener of this group.
3. Legislate, in line with EUSA's democracy regulations, that the membership of this group should be self-defining student parents and carers only.
4. Provide this group with an annual budget in line with that of the other section groups.

What is the background to this?

1. Student parents and carers experience unique barriers to participation in university life.
2. Currently there is no obvious point of contact within EUSA to raise these and so issues can fall between the gap.
3. Universities are not obliged to collect data on numbers of student parents or carers and so again they – and the issues facing them - are often invisible.
4. In 2013 EUSA student council passed a policy entitled 'Supporting Student Carers' which mandated EUSA to act as a point of contact, provide advice and information, ensure the accessibility of events, and work with the university on policy and procedure related to student carers.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. Only 36 per cent of student carers felt able to balance commitments such as work, study, and family/relationships, compared to 53 per cent of students without caring responsibilities (NUS Learning With Care Report 2013)
2. More than half of student carers (56 per cent) had seriously considered leaving their course, compared to 39 per cent of students without caring responsibilities. (NUS Learning With Care Report 2013). 60% of student parents surveyed by NUS as part of 'Meet The Parents' had seriously considered leaving their course (2011)
3. 1 in 10 student parents surveyed by NUS as part of 'Meet The Parents' reported feeling very isolated from their peers
4. A dedicated parents and carers group would allow for a clear route for beginning to tackle the barriers and problems behind these statistics, in an Edinburgh University context.
5. Student parents and carers themselves are best placed to identify and raise issues and to know what would be helpful solutions for them.

The Future of Rainy Kitchen

What will we do?

1. The School of Divinity Student Council requires EUSA put into action any measures necessary to secure the future of the EUSA facility at Rainy Kitchen.

What is the background to this?



1. "Rainy Kitchen has been managed by EUSA for some years; it has been under threat for at least the last 3 with concerns being raised as to the profitability of the resource.
2. The School of Divinity already subsidises the resource and appears willing to continue to do so.
3. There have been significant concerns as to the quality of the food provided, the frequency and reliability of deliveries, the almost constant changeover of staff; all issues, which, if improved, would improve the foot-fall of the resource.
4. EUSA must use whatever influence it holds to push the University to support this crucial facility, this has not been the case so far and the University have already confirmed it would not replace the EUSA catering facility once the current lease expires – thus leaving students at New College with (possible) vending machines. The Student Council of New College feel this option is entirely unacceptable.
5. A public meeting, held last year, overwhelmingly supported the idea of a catering resource continuing at New College (a meeting with over 50 students in attendance).
6. By supporting this motion, EUSA will give some security to the future of this invaluable resource and will, it is hoped, push for continued improvements in areas which have been mentioned above and others raised by the EUSA Rep, Tom Kerr, over the years.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The facility is of fundamental importance to the student community of New College and removal of this resource would have a severely detrimental effect on student life (and the student experience) at the School of Divinity.

[Authorised Interruption of Studies](#)

What will we do?

1. We would like EUSA to lend their backing to a much more flexible and student-led approach to Authorised Interruptions of Studies. We would like them to publicise this and promote student awareness of this and help make it known that it is very possible to circumnavigate this.

What is the background?

1. Current AIS' policy is extremely inflexible and is often undertaken without taking the affected student's choices into account.
2. There are students who have managed to circumnavigate the current stringent time limits but these instances are not being publicised and so as students see no precedent, they believe it is the only way forward.
3. One student had to travel over while on chemotherapy to negotiate being allowed to return to University despite doctor's support.
4. Another student with the same issue had previously been denied this opportunity.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?



1. The DMW group believes that a more flexible and student-led approach is the only way forward for Authorised Interruptions of Studies. In the majority of cases, the current rigidity of the policy means that they actually have an adverse effect on the students involved - for example losing connections with friends, demoralisation and feeling of exclusion, all of which are completely detrimental to students with existing access or medical issues. EUSA's support will enable us to promote awareness of this issue and give encouragement to students who feel unsupported and show them that there are ways through it if they so wish.

Tax Justice

What will we do?

1. To mandate the executive to lobby the university's senior management to adopt for applicable university procurement procedures the questions set out in the government's procurement policy note 06/13: 'Promoting tax compliance'.
2. To mandate the executive to lobby the university's senior management to work through higher education purchasing consortium of which it is a member for the adoption of these questions in the tender procedure for applicable framework agreements.
3. To devote resources to raising awareness among students of the action taken by the university and if necessary, to campaigning for the university to adopt the policy set out in 1 above.

What is the background to this?

1. The UK tax gap due to tax avoidance and evasion is estimated by HMRC to be £35bn.
2. The government has cut higher education spending by £2.9bn, or 40 per cent, since coming to office, while trebling tuition fees.
3. Christian Aid estimates developing countries lose US\$160bn through tax dodging by multinational businesses.
4. University procurement spend in the UK amounts to £8bn per year.
5. From 1 April 2013, all central government departments have been required to take companies' tax compliance, both in the UK and overseas, into account when evaluating bids for procurement contracts above £5m. This has been left optional for other public authorities, including universities.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. Tax dodging is doubly unfair, because it depletes the resources for public services and shifts the tax burden onto ordinary people, who do not have access to tax havens and expensive accountants.
2. At a time when the government is cutting public spending and increasing tuition fees, it is even more important that businesses pay their fair share of tax.
3. Businesses operating in developing countries that lack the capacity to prevent complex tax dodging have a special responsibility to behave responsibly.
4. Our university should lead by example by using its procurement policy to discourage companies from dodging their taxes in the UK and abroad. This will help ensure a fairer tax system and an adequately resourced higher



education sector in the UK, and fund desperately needed public services in developing countries.

Cost of Care Subsidy for Elected Reps

What will we do?

1. To subsidise the cost of care to any elected representative carer who wishes to attend a meeting directly linked to representation.
2. That this amount should not exceed the amount agreed upon each year by the Association Executive.

What is the background to this?

1. In November 2010, Student Council passed a policy to subsidise costs of care for elected reps attending meetings directly linked to representation, based on the following grounds:
 - i. That a proportion of students at the University of Edinburgh have to care for dependents.
 - ii. That these dependents can include children, family members and, in some cases, someone who assumes the responsibility of carer.
 - iii. That the University's childcare facilities are not available in the evenings, at the times of Edinburgh University Students' Association's representation meetings, including Student Council, Academic Committee, Welfare Committee and External Committee; or the equivalents should these council or committee titles change in the lifespan of this policy.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. It is still the case in 2015:
 - i. That one's responsibility as a carer should not disable one to representation, even though it may be financially or practically challenging.
 - ii. That it is to the benefit of the Association that every student is represented.
 - iii. That the Association must continue to take radical steps to ensure presently underrepresented minorities within the student body become represented.

Mid-Term Feedback Form for Tutors

What will we do?

1. Spread the idea of this policy to more Schools. When people realise how easy it is to implement it and the benefit that it would have, they would be more motivated and this motion will be self-propelled.
2. EUSA should showcase this idea in the upper hierarchy of the university, so there would be a movement from the top and bottom of the hierarchy.

What is the background to this?

1. The mid-term feedback system was implemented not a long time ago and has already proven its usefulness. This is due to lecturers being able to get the feedback before the end of the semester. Therefore the improvement of the course experience will happen for students who gave the feedback.
2. The mid-term feedback form consists of three sections: Start; Stop; Continue. Students can write their suggestions, express their disapproval, and



compliments respectively in each section. Its structure is simple thus easier to answer and provides concrete and succinct feedback.

3. The lecturer can discuss the matters that arise through the feedback received during the next lecture. They improve what is achievable and explain why others requirements can't be met (if this is the case, it also has a positive effect by showing to the students how the University works, i.e. lack of funding for new tutors, etc...). This will inform the lecturer on the student wishes, making it a more efficient education.
4. Most important of all, these requirements were achieved during the semester, so there was visible change for the students that gave the feedback, galvanising their participation in the University.
5. This concept has already been implemented successfully in the School of Engineering and School of Mathematics. However, tutors rarely get this feedback, thus even if there was an easy improvement that could be very beneficial to the students, they would never be aware of it. This fact is worse, by the importance of the tutor's feedback and explanations for our understanding and therefore our studies.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The mid-term feedback is a wonderful concept; nonetheless, it is normally distributed - even if not intended to - by the lecturer for the lecturer. The distribution of these forms are done in lecture theatres, which influences students to think only about the problems or advantages of the lecture, which leads to almost no feedback written for the tutors.
2. However, the tutors are as much influential as lecturers, thus giving them feedback on how to improve their work is essential! This would specially improve the feedback they give to the students which is a major issue in the University. This latter issue impacts very badly in the University ranking of the NSS (National Student Survey).
3. In another hand, these forms could be used to compliment the tutors, which is also beneficial for both parties because it creates a better working environment.
4. The only negative character this policy could create would be defined by the idea of demanding too much feedback will inhibit the student's willingness to give feedback. In response, to this the mid-term feedback form should only be given in tutorials. So it wouldn't be an addition, but a translation from the lecturer theatre to the tutorial room. It is important to know that student attendance in tutorial is a lot higher than in lectures, making this mid-term feedback a lot more impactful by reaching more students.
5. In conclusion, it is a system easy to implement, with important improvement in feedback which creates a friendlier environment, and makes student more willing to participate in the University feedback by showing them concrete results.

Erasmus and Health

What will we do?

1. Press the university to compile information for students on how to access health and disability services while abroad, and to make this information known and available before students have to decide on their placement.



2. That the university inform students of any additional cost that may occur as a result of accessing such services at their host university.
3. Lobby MEPs to have ERASMUS ensure mental health and disability support is available to students on exchange.
4. That the university inform students of any discrimination they may likely face in the host country as a result of any identity characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act (disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, marital status and religion), as well as any trouble they may have in accessing certain health services (birth control, abortion, etc.)

What is the background to this?

1. There are roughly 500 students every year who are obliged to take a year as a requirement for their degree, plus many others who will study abroad as a option.
2. 20% of students in the UK consider themselves to have a mental health problem.
3. Many places have different laws in terms of which health services a student can access and how they can go about accessing it - a process which is difficult enough to go through in the student's native language, let alone a language they're trying to learn.
4. While issues of discrimination and lack of protections may seem obvious under some governments, it may come as a surprise to some students that similar barriers are in place in other countries.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. Regardless of degree programme requirements all students should have equal access to health services and specifically mental health services which can be harder to find with greater stigma attached to seeking these out.
2. Barriers that exist for students to access these services are barriers to their education and their wellbeing.
3. Other barriers exist for students of the liberation groups that they should be made aware of before they agree to go on a certain placement.

[Gym Access for Disabled Students](#)

What will we do?

1. Mandate EUSA, through Sabbatical Officers, to lobby the University to:
 - i. Provide access, free of charge, for students with a disability or condition registered with the University's Student Disability Service, to the CSE facilities, in cases where it would be of medical benefit. This would include mental and physical health conditions.
 - ii. Given the proven medical benefit of exercise for anyone, ideally this would encompass all students with a Student Disability Service profile.
 - iii. If the University deems that unacceptable, then provide this Gym Access Service on a case-by-case basis, as assessed by an appropriate healthcare professional (for instance a GP, Physiotherapist, Counsellor, etc.)
 - iv. Trial a programme of access urgently, starting with those students who as well as having an applicable disability are also in receipt of low-income related Bursaries (e.g. the RUK Bursary). To include postgraduate



students, the trial would be open to students who were in receipt of such a bursary as an undergraduate.

v. Additionally, the Gym Access Service should apply to students receiving short term counselling support.

2. Mandate the Sabbatical Officers to begin a process within EUSA (in tandem with the University) to allow this Gym Access Service to operate within the KB Fitness, Sports & Leisure Centre in a totally interchangeable and equivalent manner.

What is the background to this?

1. For many people, the symptoms of their disability can be dramatically alleviated through exercise. This applies to disabilities both mild and severe, and can include things as seemingly mundane as chronic back pain.
2. There is a clear scientific consensus that this is the case, and the controlled and targeted exercise available at a gym is often of particular value.
3. There is also broad scientific consensus stating that exercise can assist with mental illness, and so for the purposes of this Gym Access Service mental illness would also be a possible case for eligibility.
4. The costs of disabilities vary, but can often be substantial. This is a very affordable way for the University to help with those costs, particularly for a service which despite being of medical benefit is often not the priority service for those with disabilities.
5. It is worthwhile to note that while targeted exercise might be beneficial for someone's specific disability, it is also beneficial for that person's wider health.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. Disabled students are regarded by EUSA as a Liberation Group, and by the University and Government as students who require support, so that they are not excluded from Higher Education.
2. The costs associated with a disability can be prohibitive, and EUSA has consistently tried to alleviate this problem.
3. The University should strive to provide, where it is possible, the best medical provision for disabled students.
4. The cost of this proposal to the University would be minimal, and the facilities and infrastructure for a Gym Access Service are already in existence. This would be an extension to the options available to the University's Student Disability Service.
5. By improving these students' wider health and wellbeing, there is the possibility that the number of special circumstances applications needed to be made by disabled students is reduced, which is good for these students.

[Extending the Provision of Gender Neutral Spaces](#)

What will we do?

1. Create at least one designated Gender Neutral toilet in each EUSA venue where toilet facilities are provided. These facilities shall be clearly signposted,



shall be open and easily accessible to all students and staff, and shall be separate from the accessible toilet facilities already provided.

2. Create at least one designated Gender Neutral changing space in each EUSA building in which changing facilities are provided. These facilities shall be clearly signposted, shall be open and easily accessible to all students and staff, and shall be separate from the accessible changing facilities already provided.
3. Lobby the university to provide at least one gender neutral toilet facility in each university building where toilet facilities are provided, and that these shall be clearly signposted, shall be open and accessible to all users, and shall be separate from accessible toilet facilities already provided.
4. Lobby the university to provide at least one gender neutral changing facility in each university building in which changing facilities are provided, and that these shall be clearly signposted, shall be open and accessible to all users, and shall be separate from accessible changing facilities already provided.

What is the background to this?

1. That there are students within and outside of the LGBT+ community who prefer to use gender neutral toilets and changing rooms or for whom gendered toilets are inappropriate because they do not identify with either male or female.
2. That in the majority of EUSA and University buildings there are few to no gender neutral facilities for students to use.
3. That EUSA is bringing a motion to NUS Scotland LGBT conference 2015 calling for the provision of gender neutral toilets in all Universities.
4. The Edinburgh University Trans Equality Policy states: "Ideally there should be access to gender neutral toilet facilities wherever this can be reasonably accommodated....Requiring the person to use disabled toilet facilities is not acceptable unless the individual is disabled."^[1]

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. That inadequate provision of gender neutral toilets for trans and other students who are uncomfortable or who feel unsafe using gendered facilities limits their ability to participate in their education, sport and other aspects of university life.
2. That "accessible" facilities do not constitute adequate provision for those students unless they are available for all genders and abilities to use, and that re-purposing these toilets as gender neutral toilets for all students would limit the use of accessible facilities for those who need them, unless all available toilets are accessible.
3. That students who require gender neutral facilities should not be expected to go further than those who do not or to declare themselves to have access to adequate gender neutral facilities.
4. That by not providing these facilities, EUSA and the University are failing to meet the needs of trans and other students who need them.
5. That no student, regardless of sex, gender or gender expression should be required to use gender neutral facilities in place of available gendered facilities should they not wish to, and that no student of any sex, gender or



gender expression should be prevented from using gender neutral toilets or changing rooms.

[EUSA Recognises Structural Oppression and Discrimination](#)

What will we do?

1. EUSA as a body are mandated to recognise the existence of structural and systematic oppression and discrimination within society. Specifically in regards to race, gender, disabilities & mental health, and LGBTQ+ identities.
2. The sabbatical officers, student representatives and administrative body are mandated to account for this oppression in their dealings with students and policy.
3. EUSA should push for liberation issues to be included in the curriculum and all university practices.
4. To provide more adequate support for students who are dealing with these structural oppressions. As well as lobbying the university to improve how they handle these issues.

What is the background to this?

1. A substantial number of our students still suffer from the repercussion of structural and historic oppression.
2. These inequalities can be seen in society by the under-representation of these groups in positions of power.
3. EUSA already accounts for these oppressed groups within their liberation structure, EUSA must also accept that these oppressions come from historic and hegemonic power structures. These have a real effect on students' lives to this day.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. EUSA recognises that experiences of structural oppression are different to discrimination based on other characteristics.
2. It is clear to see that a multitude of inequalities exist within society to this day. EUSA as a body which aims to represent all students would be failing in its duty if it did not recognise this.